REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are currently pending in the instant application. The above claims 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 have been amended to further clarify the recitations in a manner that should assist greater understanding of the claimed invention.

In light of the comments accompanying the Advisory Action of September 20, 2005, and the Final Office Action of May 23, 2005, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the above-captioned application. It is noted that the Advisory Action indicates that claims 1-11 stand rejected. However, in the Final Office Action, claim 9 was only objected to as containing allowable subject matter, but dependent on a rejected base claim.

In the Final Office Action, claims 1-3, 7, 8, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over the Ikeshoji *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,088,479) in view of the Abe *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,086,434); claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over the Ikeshoji *et al.* patent in view of the Abe *et al.* patent and in further view of the Melen (U.S. Patent No. 6,151,423); claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over the Ikeshoji *et al.* patent, the Abe *et al.* patent, and the Melen patent in further view of the Abe *et al.* patent (U.S. Patent No. 6,289,121, hereinafter "Abe II"); claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over the Ikeshoji *et al.*, Abe *et al.* and Melon patents in further view of the Koakutsu *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,285,459); and finally claim 11 was rejected under U.S.C. 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Ikeshoji *et al.* and Abe *et al.* patents in further view of the Johnson (U.S. Patent No. 5,212,739). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

In the Advisory Action, the Office suggests that the Ikeshoji *et al.* patent "does teach extracting areas and correspondence with character image from the image data (note fig. 1 and col. 3, line 17-20, extracting figure image data and character data having corresponding background that is removed). "The Examiner also interprets" changing image data to replace the character image data with background as merely producing a background image as shown in Ikeshoji *et al.*, citing col. 3, lines 13-16.

With respect to these comments, Applicant respectfully submits that even if accepted as an accurate description of the applied art, this characterization of the Ikeshoji *et al.* patent would not meet the recitations of the claims, particularly as clarified by the above. The Ikeshoji *et al.* patent deals with character images and the figure image has foreground images. The background is generated by deleting the character and foreground images. Stated differently, the Ikeshoji *et al.* patent deals with both character and figures as foreground elements, and the background image of the Ikeshoji system is an image where the foreground including the character and figure characters is deleted.

The present invention is generated by "changing the image data" which should be apparent that it is different than the background image of the Ikeshoji *et al.* system. In particular, the Ikeshoji patent, whether viewed alone or in combination with a secondary reference, does not teach a method of image processing comprising the steps of, *inter alia*, "changing the image data to replace the character images with reference to the image date, thereby generating changed image data representing an image which is the same as the original image except for lacking the replaced character image therefrom" so that the changed image data, character

code data can be restored along with the relationship between them. Said differently, the Ikeshoji *et al.* patent discloses obtaining the background image including spots for using a filter 100 (col. 3, line 7-16) and subtracting the obtained background image data from the image data to obtain the character figure image data (col. 3, line 7-20). It merely discloses using a filter to obtain a background image data and subtracting the background image data from the image data to obtain both character and figure image data. This is different than changing the image data to replace the character image with reference to image data thereby generating a changed image data representing an image which is the same as the original image except for lack in the replaced character image therefrom and storing the relationship between changed image data and the character code data as positively recited in claim 1. Similar recitations appear in claims 2 and 3.

Claim 4 similarly recites a correlator which changes the image data to the same as a color of an image around the character image with reference to the image data thereby generating changed image data representing an image which is the same as the original image except for lack in the replaced character references therefrom in a storage device which stores a character code data with the changed image data including a completed character image data along with the relationship between them. Claim 7 recites similar features in a different format, i.e., it recites a "deleter which deletes the character image on the background image with reference to an image data thereby generating change to image data representing the image which is the same as the original except for lacking the replaced character image therefrom" and a synthesizer which synthesizes the character code data with the changed image data.

With respect to these recitations, the Office suggests that the filter 110 acts as the "deleter". Applicant has explained that the filter actually operates to delete the background image, not the character images on the background with reference to the image data as positively recited in claims.

The secondary references, and particularly the Abe *et al.* patent, do not teach "changing the image data" as recited in the claims, nor does the Office suggest they do. The Office relied upon the Ikeshoji *et al.* patent for this teaching and the Office does not suggest that any of the secondary references provides the missing teaching from the Ikeshoji *et al.* patent as identified above.

In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully request reconsideration of the above captioned application. Should any residual issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed within the currently set shortened statutory period, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such extension of time may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

In the event that any additional fees are due with this paper, please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

Respectfully submitted,

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